

Lesson for Intermediate and Advanced Learners

Rikka

Work and commentary :
Professor

Shunso Kobayashi

【Lesson 88】

Chudan-noki

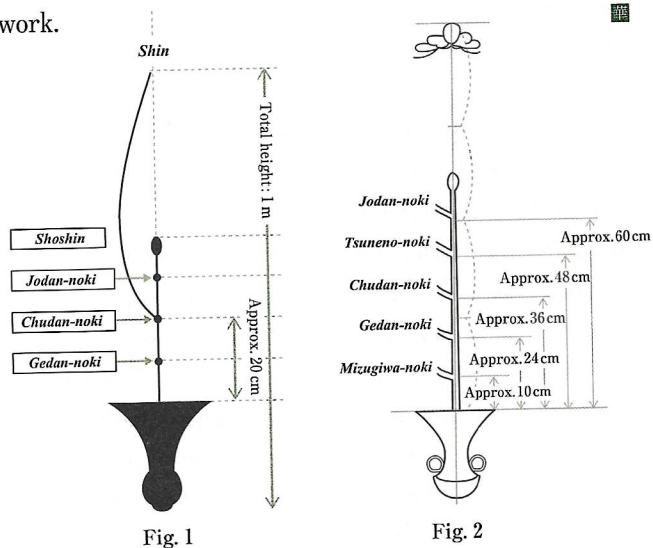
The height of the arrangement at which each *yakueda* begins curving away from the *seichusen* (an invisible centerline) is referred to as “*de*,” and the *de* of the *shin* is specified as “*noki*.” “Ikenobo *Rikka* Introductory Curriculum” specifies that the *noki* of the *shin* should be *jodan-noki*, *chudan-noki*, or *gedan-noki* (respectively, *noki* in the upper, middle, and lower sections). In this issue, we discuss the structure most often used, *chudan-noki*.

The curriculum defines the height of *shoshin* as half that of the *hanatake* (height from the rim of the vase to the tip of *shin*). The height of the *shoshin* from the rim of the vase is divided into four sections. In order from top to bottom, the three dividing points are labeled *jodan-noki*, *chudan-noki*, and *gedan-noki*. When the total height of an arrangement including the vase (25 cm) is 1 meter, *chudan-noki* is approximately 20 cm above the rim of the vase (Fig. 1).

Typical *rikka* arrangements in the Meiji Era were approximately 150 cm tall, and the *noki* of *shin* was one of the following five types (from top to bottom): *jodan-noki*, *tsuneno-noki*, *chudan-noki*, *gedan-noki*, or *mizugiwa-noki* (Fig. 2). Here, *chudan-noki* is approximately 36 cm above the rim of the vase, a height almost double that of the *chudan-noki* specified in the “Ikenobo *Rikka* Introductory Curriculum.” Also, *tsuneno-noki*, the most common structure, is approximately 48 cm above the rim of the vase. As the Meiji *rikka* arrangements are large, a notched measuring stick used to be employed to ensure that each branch is positioned to begin curving away from the *seichusen* at the proper height.

The *chudan-noki* structure, designated in the “Ikenobo *Rikka* Introductory Curriculum,” gives the *shin* branch a duly vigorous appearance. The *gedan-noki* structure can of course enhance the vigor given off by the *shin* branch even more, but this structure makes it difficult to create proper balancing of position for the other *yakueda* branches. In addition, the *chudan-noki* structure is flexible enough to be employed with various floral patterns. Considering that the *shin* branch can be arranged in various ways, *chudan-noki* may be the easiest structure in which to balance the entire arrangement.

The sample work is arranged in a floral pattern known as “*santo yusotai*.” It employs *Iris ensata* as the *shin*. *Sorbus japonica* is positioned as *irogiri* and *hikae* to create an appearance of connectivity. Accordingly, *kusamono* (grassy materials) are positioned on the *nagashi*-side to form the *kusamichi* (grass path) of the *junkusa-sugu-sagari* pattern. *Sorbus japonica* and Japanese loquat are *kimono* (woody materials), but their fresh new leaves lend a soft and bright impression to the work.



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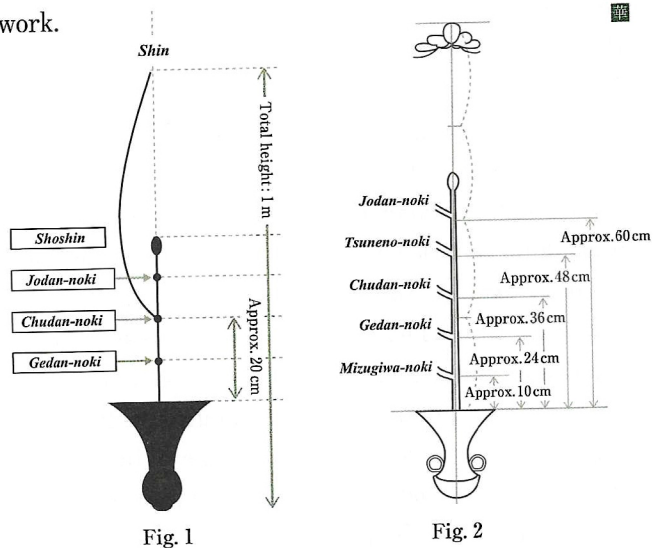
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